

## IRAN'S POLICIES DURING "WORLD WAR II

sented by conservative elements, essentially nationalist, who were reluctant to approve of any radical changes in the country and ambitious to assert their authority after a long period of dictatorship. In a period characterized by lack of strong leadership the parliament's role increased in importance. With reference to both the internal and external problems of Iran the Majlis had become a force to be reckoned with.

## THE POLITICAL PARTIES

Cutting across the groups and factions in the Majlis were the political parties. The collapse of the Reza Shah regime acted as a powerful stimulant for the creation of a number of political groups ambitious to carry out reforms. These parties had practically no past and no tradition upon which they could rely. True, various political parties existed between 1906 and 1921, i.e., between the Iranian revolution and the coup made by Zia ed-Din and Reza Khan. But that was a generation ago. In 1942 political life had to begin anew.

The urge toward some form of political expression was strong. The number of parties formed in 1942 and 1943 testified to the traditional individualistic spirit of the Iranians. It would be beyond the purposes of this study to review the composition and activity of all the parties that were created then. Suffice it to say that in 1943 some fifteen appeared on the political horizon of Teheran. Many of them had either ceased to exist or suspended their activities by 1944. Many were replaced by others. Some splits and fusions took place. The year 1944 was one of considerable political crystallization. In that year the most important parties were the Tudeh, Eradeh-yi-Melli, Mihan,

Iran, Mardom, Socialist, and Adalat parties. Two of them, the Tudeh and the Eradeh-yi-Melli, stood apart because of their close connection with Russia and Great Britain. Accordingly, we propose to study them more thoroughly in the chapters dealing with British and Soviet policies. With respect to the remaining five, it would be well at this point to indicate briefly their common features and to examine their impact on Iranian political life.<sup>8</sup>

None of these parties possessed a regular faction in the parliament. The previously mentioned parliamentary groups had nothing to do

s For a more detailed description of these parties, see Appendix no. V.